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**Re: The Horkesley Park Development**

**TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN**

The suggestion that the proposed gallery at the Horkesley Park development would be exhibiting significant works by John Constable is quite simply ludicrous. John Constable is one of the most extensively documented and researched artists in history and we know where his works are. There are however large numbers of works attributed to Constable but most of these are by nineteenth century imitators and some are downright fakes.

I have been involved with the systematic examination of the work of John Constable for many years and am familiar with Constable Collections in institutions and Private Collections in Britain, Canada, the USA and France. No national or regional institution, or indeed any of the private collections that I know, would loan works to a gallery that was part of such an ill-conceived commercial enterprise. A tawdry project, that from their own plans and projections, appears to be built on wishful thinking and personal greed, rather than adding any benefit to the community, socially, financially, scholarly, culturally or environmentally.

The wilful and arrogant assumption that putting Constable's name to such a vulgar project adds a gloss of respectability is both ignorant and damaging: it appears designed only to vulgarise a beautiful part of the country and tarnish the name of one of England's greatest artists.

**Peter Bower**

Co-curator of the *Constable's Skies* Exhibition in New York, 2004.  
Co-curator of the forthcoming John Constable exhibition for the Royal Academy, London, The Clark Institute, Williamstown, Massachusetts and the National Gallery of Canada.

I have published extensively on the working practices of many artists from the 16th century to the present, including John Constable.